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THE NORTH-AMERICAN REVIEW

**Appercu sur la situation politique des Etats Unis d'Amerique, par le General Turreau, ancien Ministre plenipotentiaire de France aux Etats Unis d'Amerique.*

Prima ferè vota et cunctis notissima templis

Divitiae ut crescant, ut opes, ut maxima toto

Nostra sit arca foro.

Juvenal Sat. 10.

A Paris chez Firmin Didot, imprimeur du Roi. 1815, 8vo. p. p. 154.

It has been our lot to be so ill-treated by foreigners ; the travellers who have described us have been with very few exceptions so ignorant or so profligate, that we almost despair of an able and unprejudiced account of the United States from a European. Every year adds new productions to the long list already existing, and for the most part in the same spirit with those which have preceded. Though repeated failures have lessened our expectations, they have not extinguished our desire, to see this country described by some manly foreigner, who should have access to good society, and possess intelligence enough to comprehend our institutions, and sufficient sagacity to remark their effects on the character and condition of our citizens. Under these feelings, we took up the work before us with considerable eagerness. An official station is perhaps not the most advantageous position for viewing a nation at large, yet in some respects it possesses peculiar advantages. It is a very uncommon circumstance for a diplomatick character to describe politically a country in which he has resided ; there are many obvious considerations to prevent this from being done. When therefore we found a view of our political situation by a foreign Ambassador who had resided among us eight years, and that too a period of striking interest, we felt the strongest curiosity to peruse his work. Under these circumstances, we might easily have expected too much ; but we confess we were wholly unprepared for utter disappointment. We do not recollect to have met before with any work, which discovered more profound

ignorance of our institutions, more gross and indiscriminate abuse of our character, more incoherent and absurd reasoning, more rash and ridiculous opinions delivered in an oracular style, more mischievous or vague and puerile advice, as to our future policy.

General Turreau, says, that his book was completed in 1811, and shewn to a gentleman in Paris, of this it bears intrinsick evidence. Considerations, *majeures* as he says, then prevented its publication, and there was a good deal of magnanimity in publishing last year, opinions which events had already falsified. Preceding the preface, there is an *avertissement* to the following effect. "It is for the United States, and only for the United States, that these pages have been written."

"Every thing which may be found in them against democratick and commercial institutions, and above all, against their union in the same system, can have no relation and cannot be applied, except to the actual political situation of North America, that is to say, to the Federal government of the American Union.

"I should further premise, that I only consider the United States of America in a general point of view. The reader may presume, that a country so peopled, constituted and governed, offers a crowd of exceptions, which it is impossible to particularize in a sketch so rapid and circumscribed as the present."

The author thus announces, that his opinions are given for our use alone. It is one of the cases where the proverb will well apply; "not to look a gift-horse in the mouth," but as it was intended for our use, we are disposed to do all in our power to make it answer the design. In his preface he says, that we Americans derided all the ancient introvertible maxims of government, which the statesmen of all ages had agreed upon, and which time had consecrated; and that the founders of our constitutions, betrayed the most consummate ignorance. He quotes from Mr. Barlow's prospectus on the subject of a national institution, a warm eulogium of our principles of government, and afterwards a passage in which Mr. Barlow says, "if these principles are not new, they are at least new combinations of principles, which require to be developed and examined and better understood than they even are by ourselves:"

on this, the General observes, "Here without doubt, is enough to enable us to form a conclusion on the Federal system of the United States of America. The Americans agree that they do not understand it, and that it is not understood even by those who admire it. This consoles us a little after having studied for eight years, without comprehending any thing about it. However, if the world be convinced as the author well remarks, that this system is the most perfect that has been discovered in matters of government, it is not absolutely necessary that one should comprehend the theory. It is in action and we can judge much better by facts than by reasonings of the merit of this sublime conception." He then goes on, "We however, lay it down as a principle, that it is impossible that a state at once democrattick and trading can have a long political existence."

There is, perhaps, less merit in the author's frank avowal, of his being utterly ignorant of the theory of our constitution after eight years study, as the whole work affords such convincing proof of it. His whole reasoning is founded on two prodigious mistakes of fact; and his whole advice on two monstrous perversions of judgment. The former consists in supposing our government to be a simple democracy, and that we are exclusively a commercial people; the latter, in thinking, what he supposes is our political system, to be the most desirable form of government, and that we should sacrifice and prohibit all commerce for the purpose of maintaining it. The subject is too familiar to our readers, to render it necessary for us to refute this error by a discussion on the nature of our constitution, which though it was an emanation from democrattick will, the adoption of universal suffrage, and is founded on a democrattick basis, is yet so assisted and modified in its operation, by aristocratick and monarchical processes and forms of action, that it is we devoutly hope, sufficiently removed for its own stability, from that most visionary, disastrous and fleeting of all forms of government, a simple democracy. The subject of commerce, we shall observe upon, after making another extract.

"Whatever may be the form of governments in our time in the civilized world, and the greater or less degree of abuse inseparable from their action, you may see in almost every country, the dispositions of the people analogous

to their geographical position, because they have been formed or preserved by institutions suited to that position.

“But the legislators of the United States have added to the vices of their institutions, all the other means of influence which were given them by their right, at that time legitimate, to publick confidence, to keep up or originate among the people, inclinations directly opposed to those, which the circumstances of time and place required. What have been the consequences, that the Americans are agglomerated, prest together on the sea coast of their territory ; that they occupy under a murderous climate, an ungrateful soil, sandy and arid, while immense territories, of a prodigious fertility, and placed under a purer sky, remain uncultivated and uninhabited. The extent of the United States, embracing so many latitudes, its productions vary as we may say for each degree of the scale, and offer infinite resources to a laborious and cultivating people. What then was the intention of nature, in regard to this vast country, and what should have been that of policy in regard to its inhabitants ? I know that it will be answered, that the state of penury in which the Americans found themselves at the epoch of their peace with England, was the reason which seemed to exact from them, that they should give the preference to those means, which would give them an easy and more rapid amelioration of the publick fortune. But the slightest reflection, destroys all the objections that can be adduced. It is when a people is poor, that it is less difficult to impose a constitution, to give to institutions the ascendant over simple prejudices of habit, and to change even if it be necessary, the state of manners. Were the Americans poor in territory that they could not cultivate ? their territory offered them real and certain riches : why seek for illusory ones in the dangerous chances of an exterior commerce, place themselves in concurrence, and thus provoke an unequal contest with the first maritime power of the world ?

“But it will be said, that the population has more than doubled in the United States since the epoch of their revolution. The increase of population has been every where, and in all times the strongest proof of the goodness of institutions, and of their agreeing with the manners and prejudices of the people.

"I do not believe that the second part of this proposition is untrue in its general application: but I am going to prove, that no consequence can be drawn from it in favour of the American confederation.*

"In admitting that the white population of the United States, was only two millions of inhabitants twenty-five years ago, and that it is now six, which seems to us exaggerated, it cannot at least be denied, that this rapid augmentation, belongs more to foreign than to local causes, and much less, to the will of individuals; and without examining here, what degree of confidence can be reasonably accorded to men employed in taking the particular census in each state, and above all, to those whose duty it is to aid results in a country where the governed as well as the governing, wish to be *great* beyond measure, without dwelling on the defect of connected and regular statistical details, the excessive individual liberty, the total absence of regulations of police, that of taxes—the abuse or contempt of laws relating to elections—the frequent transmigrations of the inhabitants from one state to another, a mania common enough in the whole union, and which does not say much in favour of local affections, the constant movement of strangers recently arrived, who run over the space in every direction that separates Boston from New-Orleans, in the hope of finding the land of promise;† the particular pretensions of each

* The crowd of emigrants, who for the last twenty years particularly, have thrown themselves into the United States, and which forms now at least a quarter of the population, has been urged by nearly the same motives. All these new comers have necessarily carried their prejudices of birth, their political and religious opinions. These first impressions were weakened without doubt, by the instant effect of other moral circumstances, and the necessity of submitting to them. But we think that it would be an error to believe that they are destroyed. It is easy to perceive in observing the United States, that all the ancient prejudices resume their empire among these new inhabitants, as soon as they can free themselves from the yoke of want, and give themselves up to all the illusions of individual independence. Hence, that diversity of views, of projects, of opinions, of sentiments and interests, which appears to us to be the characteristic trait of this singular aggregation.

† It is a curious thing enough, to hear the Americans talk of their country, and to see some strangers receiving currently every thing they relate. The sad remains of the establishments on the Scioto may suffice to guard credulous men against this kind of seduction. However, the United States offer to strangers some real advantages in many respects. We shall speak of them.

state, and the vanity of *all*, which are so many obstacles to a just numerical valuation of the inhabitants; we shall only say, that in a country where the bills of mortality* offer us a daily list of victims to consumption, cholera morbus, scurvy, spotted fever, croup, yellow fever and other maladies, some very uncommon, the others unknown in Europe; we must assert, that in a country where the physical education of children is abandoned to the care of chance; where that of youth is delivered over to the seductions of every pleasure and of every disorder, in a country where the malignant quality of the waters, the abuse in the use of Madeira, of spirit, and generally a bad diet, decompose the blood in the prime of life, prematurely bring on old age and decay, and afflict families with those chronick and hereditary disorders, which extend their ravages through all the branches of the connexion; in such a country, it is difficult to attribute such a prodigious increase of population simply to natural and local causes.

“ But if we pay attention to the movements which have agitated Europe for twenty years; if we consider that the effects of the French Revolution were not confined to France, that they have operated a political schism in all the bordering states, where the ascendancy of her arms assured a triumph to the opinion of the day and the party which inspired it. That victory sometimes alternating, and prolonging therefore, the hope of opposite factions, render the insolence of the victors more insupportable, and the danger of the vanquished more imminent; that these latter often owed their safety only to a forced or voluntary exile; if we learn that at this epoch, American Missionaries, animated with a fervour truly apostolick, running over France, Holland, Germany, and even Switzerland, seconded or created among the inhabitants a disposition to emigration, and directed it towards the United States, towards that fortunate country, where might be realized in favour of new comers, all the fables of the Eldorado; if we recollect, that at the same epoch, Ireland having been the theatre of new troubles, new

* Life is speedily used up in the United States, and generally, they die young. It has often happened to me to walk for hours together in the most populous streets of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New-York, without meeting a single old man.

proscriptions forced away a great number of the inhabitants ; if we further recollect, that a part of the Antilles, and particularly St. Domingo, shaken to their very foundations by the shock of the mother country, threw on the shores of the United States, a crowd of colonists who escaped from the sword of the Africans : if it is considered that the American government, wishing to increase their people, *per fas et nefas*, excite desertion among the crews of European vessels frequenting their ports, and secretly protect deserters against the laws of nations, and sometimes in defiance of the most formal treaties : if it is considered that strangers who have drawn upon them in their own country, the watchfulness of the police, and the particular notice of the law, find in the United States, in the indolence of their institutions and the improvidence of legislators impunity for past crimes, and a kind of guarantee for new ones : if it is considered in fine, that among the naturalized, there are a great number of *new English* (*Anglais nouveaux*,) whose *political* domicile can only be attributed to the interest of affairs or of events, we shall know the principal causes of the increase of population in the states of the American Union.

“ It is then, to circumstances purely casual, and not to the simplicity of manners, or to the goodness of their institutions, and still less to the influence of commerce, that we may reasonably attribute the astonishing multiplication of the inhabitants of the United States ; and the progress of their population depends so much on the causes we have assigned for it, that the first result of their approaching rupture with England will be a perceptible diminution of that population. We venture to predict still further, wishing at the same time, that we may be deceived, that the return of peace and even of advantageous peace, will not hinder the Americans from decreasing, unless they amend their institutions, or unless they renounce all foreign commerce.

“ But before proving that such a commerce cannot procure for the States a real and durable prosperity, let us examine what has ever been the destiny of trading nations.

“ The ancient legislators and philosophical writers of all times, have considered commerce as the last resource of corrupted nations, and as the least honourable of national professions. If among those who were called to give laws,

or to govern states, there were any who thought it proper to employ this spring to aid the progress of publick administration, it is because they were constrained to it by the imperious disposition of locality and circumstances.

"Commerce in general deteriorates the moral, as well as the physical character of a people, because it infects with its vices, not only the individuals who exercise it directly, but still more, because it extends and prolongs its ravages over every branch of the community, and through the whole chain of generations.

"Commerce destroys the local affections ; weakens family connexions ; essentially the enemy of generous ideas and liberal principles, it corrupts every mind, deforms every character, and depraves every sentiment. In fact, the trader, (*marchand*) and I comprehend in this denomination all the artizans of commerce, from the shopkeeper to the merchant of the highest order, who only speculates in the perfumes of Arabia, the spices of India, and the blood of Africans. The trader, I have said, has but one principle, one interest, one object, to which he refers every thing, submits every thing, sacrifices every thing. Selfishness is the doctrine of the trade, and he becomes selfish ; it is necessary that he should be economical, and he becomes avaricious. The concurrence of sellers renders him envious ; that of buyers makes him covetous. The merchant turns to his profit all the errors of approximation ; he furnishes at a maximum and sells at a minimum of weights and measures. He gives to all objects of his traffick an arbitrary and factitious value, were it the current price (*futelle le prix courant*) since they can receive nothing real, except their intrinsic value and except the cost of the matter and of its fabrication. (*Puisqu'ils n'en peuvent recevoir de réelle, que de leur valeur intrinsèque, que du coût des matières et de la fabrication.*) The trader imposes a forced contribution upon every thing that surrounds him. The consumer is always the victim of his avidity. Is he privileged ? he monopolizes. Is he subjected to taxes ? it is again the consumers who pay them. Is any merchandize scarce ? the price rises, and the sum of privations and general want becomes the tariff of the trader. In fine, commerce by engrossing all the resources of individuals, pumps and dries up insensibly the national resources ; and such is

the homicidal privilege of this anti-social profession, that the times of general distress are almost always the epoch of its prosperity ; and the greater part of mercantile fortunes are at once the cause and effect of publick misery.*

“ Long details would be useless to prove that commerce deteriorates the physical constitution of a people, since it corrupts that of individuals. We will observe only, that it has rendered common to all climates those fatal epidemics, which during the last two centuries especially, have spread over different parts of the globe, and from which there is no escape for the victim, but expatriation. And we will add, that it is always in maritime cities or in those where there are great entrepots of commerce, that the first symptoms of all epidemick maladies are shewn, a modern scourge of which it is impossible to calculate the duration, to moderate the influence, or to arrest the ravages. It is said, (it is in the United States that they say so) that commerce aided by democracy, renders a nation rich, powerful and prosperous. The assertion is at least hazardous. It is not difficult to destroy it with a knowledge of the constituent principle of a democracy, and of the elements which com-

* When I speak thus of commerce, it may be easily presumed, that it is not to proscribe the exchange of useful objects or their value ; it is not to blame that innocent and liberal traffick, which operating between neighbours, is an additional chain of connexion for the citizens. I shall observe only, that in this point of view, we should encourage in a state all the relations between man and man, they must be restrained as much as possible, between one state and another, that is to say, between your own citizens and foreigners. For that is the principle of all the disorders that can afflict a weak government, that is to say, a democrattick government ; and it is commerce again, that produces all these disorders in multiplying the points of contact between strangers and the citizens. It is thus that it *denationalizes* individuals ; that it extinguishes the love of country, that it takes possession of every will and directs them towards its sphere of activity ; it is thus that it becomes a power in the state ; it is thus that the state loses its citizens, and has insensibly nothing but shopkeepers, lawyers and journalists. There too, patriotism is in every mouth, and selfishness in every heart. It is there too, that a government weak in its nature, and still more by the feebleness and incoherence of its institutions, having no longer either will or spontaneous action, is constrained not only to cede but to aid the dominant party, and thus to lose the very last of its means, the force of inertness. We beg, however, the reader not to forget, that all we say against this monstrous alliance of democracy and commerce, should be particularly applied to the political situation of the Americans,

pose it, and in attending to the precision as well as to the justness of our expressions ; for in a country where the prevailing religion is that of commerce, and where necessarily you can have no discussion but with shopkeepers or lawyers, one must be ready to discuss the value of words, as well as that of merchandize.

“ Commerce demands entire liberty. All the regulations which the state would impose upon it, will be always in direct opposition to its interests. If they favour it, it will be in evident contradiction with democratick institutions. If, as a celebrated writer has said, and experience has proved, ‘ a democratick government is only suitable for poor and small states,’ it is absurd to constitute and endeavour to render stable, a state at once democratick and trading. In fact, a democratick government proscribes luxury ; or rather it is kept off by the publick manners ;* for when a democracy feels the want of sumptuary laws it is already on the decline. But the speculations of commerce bear in reality only on superfluities, on foreign productions, and generally upon all the objects to which caprice, aided by wealth, assigns a value as imaginary, as the wants that attract them. The laws, infinitely multiplied, are necessarily complicated in a state given up to commerce. A small number of laws, and above all, simple laws, suffice for a democracy. The interests of commerce are diverging and private. In a democracy, all interests converge towards a common centre, or rather they reunite and blend themselves with the interests of the state. Traders are necessary to a commercial state : citizens are wanted for a democracy. In fine, virtue is the basis of democracy, and up to this period at least, virtue has not taken for companions the attributes of commerce.” p. 34.

* Do you wish an example of the power of publick manners in a government of this nature, open the history of the small Helvetick cantons. Switzerland gained and preserved her political institutions by the force of her manners ; and when at the close of the last century, the Lords of Berne and Solcure, seduced by the intrigues of England, and their financial relations with that power, wished to meddle with France, Switzerland would have been lost, if her manners had not saved her ; and the smaller cantons, particularly the democratick cantons, have preserved their virtues, their customs and their laws. But is there in the civilized world another country, where the people know how to live on chesnuts and sour milk ?

We cannot dwell on all the mistakes in the preceding extract, and they are so palpable that it is unnecessary. The author throughout his work, exhibits the greatest contempt for the statesmen who founded our institutions. The plan of a general migration into the interior would have had this fine effect, that the powers of Europe might then have taken possession of the sea-coast, and fortifying the tenable positions, have had our population as much under their control, as we now have the savage. He thinks our legislators should have done violence to the manners, the prejudices, the feelings of the people, and driven them to create amid the forests, more perfect systems of government. He belongs to a school whose only resort is violence; this to be sure, for a time overturned every thing and established nothing; yet the experience of so much disaster has not altered his habits of thinking. Our ancestors, settled of course, on the sea-coast, where the climate is, contrary to his opinion, in general milder and healthier than in the interior; the soil is in many places poor, but interspersed with some fertile districts. As they increased in strength and numbers, they gradually advanced from the sea-shore, and with such rapid strides and such compound ratio of increase in late years, that our settlements now extend a thousand miles from the coast; and in districts, where at the period of the war in La Vendee, no civilized man had ever penetrated, there is now a prosperous population, more numerous even than the one destroyed by General Turreau and his coadjutors, in that barbarous contest.

The author admits, that increasing population is one of the surest tests of prosperity and of good institutions, but it is amusing to observe, how strenuously he labours to get out of the dilemma in which this admission would place him, by attributing the prodigious increase of the population of the United States to foreign emigration, and denying that it is due to "natural and local causes." He reminds us of the story of a certain childless Irish lady of rank, who went one day to the cottage of one of her tenants, where there were more children than panes of glass; and offering a reward to the poor woman, insisted on knowing the secret. But General Turreau undervaluing "natural and local" causes, accounts for the increase of our population by attributing one fourth of it, or two millions to foreign emigra-

tion. This calculation is as well founded as most of his other opinions. We have never heard any estimation of the number of emigrants who have arrived in the United States during the last five and twenty years; we should say, however, that 400,000 was a very large estimate. Of the French either from France or the Colonies, very few remained. Besides their extreme nationality, so highly honourable to them, which is constantly drawing them towards their own country, there is no nation in Europe, which cannot endure a residence here better than the French. As teachers of their language and polite accomplishments, as cooks and milliners, a few as merchants, very rarely as manufacturers or as land holders, they may be found in all our cities; even few of these look on their stay as more than temporary, or consider this country as one that they have irrevocably adopted. They find the difference of language constantly irksome; there is besides too much enterprize, and too much solicitude, too much coldness and too much awkwardness of manner, too much personal liberty and independence, too much intensity in grave pursuits, and too little exterior gayety, to permit them to blend their existence with ours. The revolution drove some of the adherents of royalty among us, who almost all returned as soon as their proscription was at an end; a recent change has driven others into exile here, who will probably return, like the preceding, whenever circumstances will permit.

The author asserts that life is quickly consumed in the United States, and that few individuals attain to old age, that he has walked for hours in the streets of Baltimore, Philadelphia and New-York, without meeting any aged persons; that the abandonment in our infant, and the profligacy of our youthful state, together with the train of horrible disorders almost unknown in Europe, are the causes of our perishing so prematurely. We might say in return, that we have walked for hours in France, without meeting any *young* men, which was probably owing to a horrible disorder that prevailed in that country, wholly unknown in this, called *conscription*. With respect to the cities he mentions, their growth has been so rapid, and they are principally young or middle aged people who form this sudden growth, that it is not to be wondered at, if the proportion of aged people should be very small; as to Baltimore, the

citizens have not had time to grow old since the foundation of the city. The bills of mortality however, so far as they have been kept with exactness, shew that life is more prolonged with us than in many countries of Europe; and we believe the scale of annuities received there, has never been altered in regard to life here. This however, is not a new theory. We had once a discussion with a French author, who has published a work on this country; he maintained this same doctrine, asserted that no man in it reached the age of eighty, and very rarely, that of sixty. One is sometimes so confounded by violent absurdity as to be almost unable to answer it. In the instance here alluded to, we cited, till other facts could be called to mind, that several of our own relations had reached the age of eighty; but without denying this, which was only an exception to a general rule, he still asserted, that the people neither did, nor could live to old age, he had proved it and shewn the reasons in a work he had composed on the subject: as in another instance, the battle was fought, and any facts came to late; as this is no doubt the case with the writer before us, we shall not pursue it farther.

It would hardly be worth while to refute the opinions of an author, respecting commerce, whose conceptions of the subject appear to have originated in considering the diminutive dealings of some sorry huckster; since he lays down its main principle to consist in "selling at a minimum of weights and measures." He talks very properly about the Phenicians and Carthaginians, whose commercial operations were as similar to those of our times, as the triremes which carried the Greeks to the siege of Troy, were to the three deckers of modern navies. His plan of blending the whole hierarchy of commerce, and taking the most sordid trader as the representative of the profession, is only equalled, by considering the merchant who imports the productions of India, and the infamous outlaw who deals in the misery of Africans, as of one class; which is like placing in the same rank, the generous patriot, who rushes to meet the invasion of a foreign enemy, with the sanguinary partizan, who in ferocious, domestick strife, gluts his sword in the blood of his countrymen.

The vast increase of commerce in the world, has changed the whole state of society, and produced the most obvious

and permanent melioration in the condition of the bulk of mankind. Commerce itself is the mere instrument for promoting the prosperity of all other employments. The plough is put in motion by the ship; and the accumulation of property, which is received from both, support and multiply all the intellectual pursuits of mankind. The activity of commerce, which is the result of the prosperity of agriculture and manufactures, is one of the surest supports of civil liberty and general refinement. Indeed, it is not a little suspicious to find the supporters of despotick government, under all the various forms it has assumed in France, constantly declaiming against commerce, and praising only agriculture. Is this system pursued, because military life is thus rendered the only employment that active minds can pursue, and because an agricultural population has ever been the most prolific and least resisting source to supply the ranks of military depotism? Some visionary reasoners in this country, who have imbibed all the ideas of the French economists, have done some mischief by propagating their ideas, no doubt with honest intentions; but as the liberty of commerce is the foundation of all other freedom and all excitement to production, either in agriculture or the arts; we should watch with close attention the sinister views of those demagogues, who in declaiming against commerce, fill the same office they have always held in all countries, that of being what the Jackall is to the Lion, the precursors and purveyors of despots.

It is a very narrow and unphilosophical view that supposes the trader more selfish than the farmer; the same general motives govern all mankind, in all employments; the shopkeeper who sells a pound of sugar is not more avaricious than the farmer who sells a bushel of corn; and as a general rule, he is perhaps less timid and niggardly in his operations, from a very natural cause, that taken in the same relative standing, his operations are quicker and more multiplied. Avarice is confined to no particular profession, and if a merchant sometimes rejoices in the high price of flour, the farmer receives very complacently the price of scarcity for his wheat. That the merchant escapes from contributions, which are all thrown on the rest of the community is not true in any country we are acquainted with, and least of all in this; and if it ever takes place, can only happen under the most vicious governments, and imperfect adminis-

trations. That the greater part of mercantile fortunes are at once the cause and effect of publick misery, is an assertion too extravagantly foolish to need refutation.

The prodigious increase of commercial interchange between nations in modern times, has had among many other beneficial tendencies, that of raising the character of merchants in the scale of society; and this has generally been in proportion to the degree of intelligence and liberty, existing in the community where they resided. When commerce was throughout the world, what General Turreau wishes it should now become in the United States, the mere bartering of surplus commodities between neighbours; mankind had few wants beyond that of animal nourishment, and as a small portion of labour would suffice for this, the great majority were condemned to ignorance and vassalage, either obliged to live indolently, or occupied in lawless violence at the caprice of a master. The operations of commerce being then insignificant, and its protection arbitrary, those who pursued it must have been low, cunning and mean. Its progress with the improvement of society, of which it was one of the most efficient causes, is too familiar to be followed here. In the small states of Italy, the merchants were converted into an aristocracy, in Holland they became enlightened and efficient patriots, and in England they gradually advanced in importance, till they were occasionally incorporated into the peerage. The traders of the dark ages were most commonly of that proscribed nation, which is still so degraded in many countries of Europe; as their transactions were trifling, and their persons without protection, they lived in contempt and at the mercy of any feudal tyrant who chose to amerce them. What kind of resemblance is there between people of this description, and a merchant of our times, who receives all the advantages and refinements of education, who finds his profession respected, and often employs more individuals, and manages a greater revenue, than some independent princes?

In the United States the mercantile profession stands higher than in any other country, even than in England. Indeed, here no profession is considered a disqualification for any publick employment; the prejudices which still exist in Europe against men who are actively engaged in the various private employments of life, have here no ex-

istence. Notwithstanding the rude shocks which aristocratical pride received in France, by the revolutionary prostration of its hereditary pretensions to exclusive respect; and the gradual diminution of the same feelings in England, from the diffusion of wealth, education and the influence derived from them; there is still a gradation in opinion respecting rank, founded on other considerations than either merit or *virtu*. This too, is felt by the individuals themselves, and so long as they feel that they are subordinate, there will exist a degree of inferiority. But in this country a man's profession is hardly ever considered, and excites no degrading prejudice against him. A merchant, like a lawyer, a planter or physician, if his circumstances or the qualities of his mind liberate him from a confined attention to his own particular pursuits, is a candidate for any employment, and the profession he may have adopted is never considered. It is obvious that the tone of character must be higher under these circumstances, than in those countries, where the jealousy and pretensions of a privileged class lead them to cast a shade of ridicule or contempt on all those professions which they consider beneath them; and which really are so, while those who profess them conform to this scale of appreciation.

The merchant in the United States has a country; he is not the mere burgher of a privileged city, whose whole views are centered in commerce, who is never to take a part or even discuss any political concerns, and who educates his children merely to replace him in the counting-house. He is here a landholder, his property is connected with the permanent interior improvement of his country, and he is often called upon to take a share in political life. His interests therefore, are those of his nation, and though he may sometimes view them in an exaggerated point of view; he is only liable to the same impulse, which may lead a cultivator to take a false estimate of his particular interests, and the measures that will promote them: a wise government listens to the reasonings of both, and is influenced by the clamours of neither; but pursues with steadiness the general good, which may often be discovered from examining and comparing the partial statements of different classes of the community.

Nothing can be more false or more mischievous than to represent the United States as exclusively a commercial nation; to place her in the scale of the Hanse Towns, or the provinces of Holland. They are at once an agricultural, a commercial and a manufacturing nation. The present writer, and others with the same views, throw out this assertion to create a senseless jealousy and hatred of an interest which they say preponderates over others, the importance of which is intimately felt by those who are engaged in them. Events in Europe threw into our hands, soon after our present government went into action, an immense share of lucrative foreign trade. This was wisely made use of while it lasted, and after all the deductions, which the spoiliations of European powers took from it, there still remained a great addition to our disposable wealth, which has principally served to develop the internal resources of the country; to improve its agriculture, to form roads, bridges and canals, to make the interior accessible to markets for its produce, and to afford the highest price for that produce. Much of this adventitious trade will pass out of our hands. Superiour enterprise, greater celerity, and at least equal sagacity will always give us an adequate portion of it. In the mean time the coasting trade, the exchange of domestick products, has grown to be an object of the greatest importance, and as this increases annually, the time is not remote when it will eclipse the splendour of foreign trade. If men who cannot be convinced by argument, would only submit to experience, there would be no misconceptions on this subject. Experience has shewn invariably and incontrovertibly in the United States at least, that agriculture and manufactures have flourished as commerce has prospered; in the absence of restriction their interests are advantageously blended and mutually promoted; and whenever commerce has been interrupted by foreign or domestick jealousy, the reward of labour in every other branch has been diminished.

If commerce, as General Turreau observes, is opposed to all interference of government, it can only be odious to arbitrary power; for a wise administration will always allow it all the protection and freedom it requires. How much more fortunate would it have been for France, if Napoleon had listened to the remonstrances of the merchants, for

even in France they remonstrated against his measures for the destruction of commerce ; to say nothing of justice or humanity, how superiour in sagacity, in policy, in the science of political economy, were the opinions of those merchants, to those of the insolent, bigoted, and violent authors of that ruinous system. With respect to their publick spirit, they may in a free country, vie with any other class ; they may be sometimes led away into unreasonable apprehension or expectation from any particular measure for a short time, but under an intelligent administration, they will never be long in opposition. They bear their share of the publick burthens with commonly less grumbling than other classes ; and where their rights are not trampled upon, often afford prompt and useful aid in times of distress. As to that species of voluntary taxation for the foundation and support of beneficent and learned institutions, which is one of the strongest tests of intelligence and publick spirit in a free country, they are seldom found deficient in contributing their proportion. Look at the Hospitals, the Colleges and other establishments of these classes in Holland, England and the United States, and after ascertaining what portion of them is due to the generosity of mercantile men, decide whether this body is wanting in liberality or intelligence.

We shall next take some of his remarks relating to the affair of the Chesapeake frigate.

“ But was it probable that France and England would suffer this parasitical power to enjoy gratuitously all the advantages which this usurped and contraband commerce procured for it ? Could the federal government believe, that the shame of the humiliations to which it had been accustomed, sufficed to expiate the rapine of its traders ? That Great-Britain, above all, who makes her political existence depend on that of her commerce, would voluntarily share the benefit with the inhabitants of her ancient colonies, whom she still considers as rebels ?

“ If other recollections have rendered France more generous or more indulgent, has the government of the United States treated it better than England ? and has it not on the contrary sought to propitiate this latter at the expense of her rival ? Is it not against the interests of France principally that the commission trade has employed its most

shameful subterfuges, which proves equally its baseness and cupidity, such as false papers, the disguising of merchandize and its destination, the prostitution of oaths before the tribunals, and above all, the substitution of foreign colours to that of a flag which they no longer dared to show?

“ We do not fear that these assertions can be disproved, because they can be proved if necessary, by the official journals of the times, by the archives of Congress, and the records of the tribunals of commerce in France and in England.

“ However it may be, the English government, wishing to put an end to the usurpations of the fraudulent commerce of the Americans, on the national commerce of Great Britain, and manifest its high contempt for the starred* flag, suspended by its prohibitive acts, the activity of neutral commerce; despised openly the Independence of the United States, and attacked without appearance of motive, nor even any pretext, their ships of war at gun shot distance from their coast, and in the waters of their municipal jurisdiction.”

The author goes on to narrate the particulars of that disgraceful occurrence. We have selected this extract for the purpose of giving the secret history of a very memorable event, which will be perpetuated in our annals, and which is here, as indeed it often has before, been attributed to a deep and deliberate design of the British Cabinet. It is however, merely to gratify curiosity, that we give this relation, derived from a source which leaves us no doubt of its correctness; and not to influence opinion in respect to that transaction, which afterwards grew into a most confused and portentous matter of negotiation: an affair the most insignificant in its origin, may by the subsequent conduct of the parties, be made to attain the most serious political bearings. This event became a cause of war; the indiscretion and despicable vanity of an individual, may sometimes involve nations in all the calamities of protracted hostility. It is said that Spain once went to war because one of her

* “ The flag of the United States is ornamented with stars; the number of these stars is determined by the number of particular States. It is not yet certain whether they are fixed stars.”

Ambassadors was received by a Secretary of State in boots. We have heard the following account of this business. A young man of noble family, commanded a ship off the Chesapeake; being at Norfolk, some of his men ran away; with an excess of insolence and rashness, he took measures to recover them in the port of a foreign country, which would not have been endured even in a port of his own. He and his attendants were in consequence insulted and rather scurvily treated by the populace. In great dudgeon he sailed to Halifax, to complain to the Admiral that "he had not been treated with respect." The Admiral having regard to an expected family connexion, instead of a reprimand for his folly, sympathized with his feelings, and sent off a ship with orders to stop the Chesapeake and search her for deserters. The commanding officer on that station, in executing these orders, which excited his astonishment, might have employed a 74, and the transaction would then have been in a degree less odious, as the superiority of force would have precluded any contest and loss of lives. Out of personal ill will however to the officer who brought the orders, he despatched him on this service, in a ship whose disparity with the Chesapeake was not so great as to prevent a combat. The officer thus obliged to attack the American frigate, was afterwards deprived of employ, though innocent, for having been engaged in this obnoxious affair; while the Admiral who ordered it, having powerful family connexions, was promoted to a better station. Such are the justice and generosity of governments.

The prophetick spirit of the author may be appreciated by his prediction, that the repeal of the embargo would give "the last blow to the government of the Union," and that in consequence the government had "lost without resource its consideration, within as well as without, and has no longer a shade of authority." His political wisdom may be inferred from his admiration of that destructive, debasing system; and his fitness to appreciate the operations of a free government, from his inexpressible regret and indignation, that the organs of publick sentiment, who in their legislative capacity repealed that measure, did not meet on the very theatre of their exertions with a violent death. His remarks on the American journalists, we publish out of pure magnanimity, they are contained in a note to the passage which alludes to the embargo.

“The degradation of political power is so perceptible in the United States, that the parties always take the tone and attitude of factions ; which is in our opinion the least equivocal proof of the bad character of the government, and the weakness of its members. The last session of the tenth Congress (which made and repealed the law of the Embargo,) has placed in evidence the danger which the constitution must encounter each time that the duty and opinion of its administrators come in opposition with the thoughtless will of the people ; whenever the former shall endeavour to draw back the others to a dependance on the laws, and to defend from that want of foresight, which in every country is the characteristick trait of the people. The last Congress, (the second session of the tenth) where the numerical minority became in fact, the majority ; where all the measures were carried by the menaces of some factious men ;* that Congress, in which the voice of a particular state

* “The American journalists who are always and of necessity party men, who, for the most part, read only to censure, and censure with acrimony every thing that comes from a foreign pen, will not fail to make applications here, and to throw all the odium on the text, in order to justify their commentaries. We protest in advance against all personal allusion. We do not know how to flatter, but we do not wish to offend. *Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo.* We esteem that political writer, who speaks what he believes to be the truth on all subjects. We despise supremely the despicable journalist (*folliculaire*) who is ignorant of the respect due to the publick functionary, as well as to the man in private life. For if there can exist no real civil and political liberty without the freedom of the press ; it must also be allowed, that the license and the excess of some periodical writers are grievous abuses in every political society ; above all, in a young nation where the institutions are still vacillating, and the powers without equilibrium. After this profession of faith, and the severe tone which reigns in this work, every honest, intelligent and impartial reader, can pronounce on the intentions and on the independence of the opinions of the author. We know however, that the Americans are not fond of hearing the truth about their country, their institutions and their government ; and we have not forgotten what was the fate of certain letters written to Mr. Adams, by one of the most celebrated writers of the last century, by Mably, the worthy emulator of Montesquieu, who had dared to indicate some incorrections in the constitutional system of several states of the Union. The following paragraph is from the *Mercure de France*, for January, 1785, No. 11.”

“The last work of the Abbe de Mably, on the constitutions of the United States of America, has made the Americans indignant against that estimable writer. In many states he has been hung in effigy, as the enemy of liberty and toleration, and his book has been dragged

dictated a general law, has given the last blow to the government of the Union. That government has lost without resource its consideration within, as well as without, and has no longer a shade of authority.

“The pusillanimous men are very guilty in the eyes of reason and policy, who suffered the federal power and that of the States, to be insulted with impunity. At Rome, a tribune, a senator, a consul, who dared make an appeal to the people against the national authority, was on the spot, delivered over to the vengeance of the laws ; and the forum, the witness of his crime, was also of his death. In Rome ——— but it is a question of the United States.”

There is such a striking coincidence between the remarks of General Turreau, and those of M. De Beaujour in a work, which was reviewed in a former number, on the subject of bankruptcy, that it is natural to presume the Minister and the Consul must have communicated their ideas to each other. The former is determined not to be outdone by the latter in extravagance, and this sentence in the following extract, needs no comment. “What is most astonishing, and which proves to what a degree publick morality is violated with impunity in the United States, is that a man who has obtained on his own oath an act of insolvency, is only the more sought for by people of business, and acquires such a degree of confidence for his future transactions, that he attains a fortune rapidly.

“Sometimes even it (the Federal government) has been seen in contempt of its dignity and its political conscience to seek and acquire a shameful popularity, in tolerating the emission of scandalous laws and accustoming opinion, already guilty, to save from infamy fraudulent debtors.

“It has been observed to me, that it was the particular legislation of separate states that should be reproached with the law which protects bankrupts so effectually. I know nothing about it ; and I am not curious to unravel that maze

through the mud. This treatment which may appear more shameful to those who have inflicted it, than to him who was the object of it, proves at least, that the Americans do not like to receive advice.

“We do not expect the same honour for our person, nor for our pages ; but we should doubtless felicitate ourselves, if the popular inquisitors, who are in power in the United States, would give towards us a new proof of their discernment and moderation.”

of laws, which rule jointly and separately all the branches of the American Union. But I have found in the federal constitutional code, in the eighth section of the first article, the following paragraph.

“ ‘Congress shall have power to establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcy, throughout the United States.’ The approximation or rather this species of amalgamation of the words *naturalization* and *bankruptcy* may seem rather singular. It appears that it was the intention of the legislator to assure a special protection to every adventurer, of whom the people of Europe might choose to purge their territory.

“ Whatever may have been the authority that made this law, it is an indelible monument of perversity : I appeal to the judgment of honest and enlightened men of every country, to know which is most corrupt, the legislator who proposes such a law, or the people who approve it ; and to pronounce what can be the state of morals among such a people. What is most astonishing, and which proves to what a degree publick morality is violated with impunity in the United States, is that a man who has obtained on his own oath an act of insolvency, is only the more sought for by people of business, and acquires such a degree of confidence for his future transactions, that he attains a fortune rapidly. I have been assured also, that in England they suffer faithless debtors to save themselves from the severity of the law. It is less surprising then, that the American legislators should be anxious to go further than the authors of the British code ; and when the law is limited in England to the toleration of bankrupts, a regulation should be found in the United States which protects them.”

We have made this last extract, to have an opportunity of assenting to one of the author’s opinions. He has more than once expressed a very just censure on the impolicy of our naturalization laws. This is a subject which is becoming every day of more urgent importance, and the necessity of a revision of our laws on this point more obviously expedient. No one can wish to prevent strangers from coming among us to settle, though the author carries his ideas to that extent. We have room enough for almost every description of emigrants, and ready employment. A small accession of them interspersed among our citizens is

useful in many respects—they bring with them, some valuable knowledge and experience, and often introduce improvements; they serve also, to counteract that illiberal, overbearing, paltry vanity, which makes the inhabitants of small communities very apt to suppose themselves superior to all the rest of the world; and prone to discourage all amelioration and enlargement of policy. Strangers, in this respect, have in some degree the effect which a great metropolis has upon society, and compel vulgar, village mediocrity to submit to the toleration of improvement. Let us then receive them with hospitality, offer them all the facilities of exercising their professions, of acquiring property by their industry, of investing and securing it; but not employ them to legislate for, or govern us. Let their children acquire from their birth, the birthrights of Americans, but do not let us give away our own, like a mess of pottage, to the first foreigner that solicits it. We can conceive that a man condemned to misfortune, by the force of circumstances in Europe, should gradually conceive an attachment for an asylum, where he may retrieve his condition and enjoy repose and prosperity; yet we cannot imagine for a moment, how a man can ever be indifferent to the country, any more than to the parents, that gave him existence; and if he preserves either resentment or partiality towards it, how can he be safely entrusted with power in the land of his adoption, if its relations with the one he has left ever become a subject of discussion? In according protection to the peaceable exercise of a profession, to the acquisition of property, and the tenure of real estate, we do more than any other nation ever does indiscriminately; and as we do not wish to import legislators, all emigrants who are not satisfied with these essential privileges, it will be best to keep at a distance.

The most enormous offence of this work, is contained in the following extract.

“But the capital vice of the American institutions is in their incoherence. The authors of the confederation, in adopting for the government of the Union the principle of the renewal of authority as a fundamental and common disposition, have thought proper to except the judiciary order, and to guarantee the immovability of the judges of the Supreme Court to assure their independence.

“What has resulted from this derogation of the constitutional principle? That the judicial authority, has become in fact, the first federal authority; and is so in public opinion as well as by law.”

He adds further reflections in the same style. It is precisely this principle of our judiciary, which the author thinks such a deformity, that is the most beautiful feature in our political system. It is the provision which without containing the seeds of danger in itself, or the possibility of usurpation, is the great safe guard of our liberty, the only permanent basis it possesses. It is this which gives our liberty one security that is not possessed in England. There, an act of Parliament is paramount, and the nation have no immediate check against the unjust or tyrannical conduct of the party in power. Here, if a majority of Congress should ever in a moment of delusion, of passion or corruption, infringe by their acts the fundamental rights of the people; the sacred Areopagus of the nation will point out the infraction. They will give the government and the people an opportunity to reflect, before they destroy the constitution: yet they can only warn; if the administration choose to violate the principles of the constitution and the citizens support them in it, the judiciary can do no more; their power is only a political conscience which can point out the deviation, but must yield to the will of the nation. A foreigner, who has been accustomed to notorious and avowed venality of Judges, cannot be persuaded of the advantage attending this principle of making the Judges the guardians of the Constitution. He who has seen them the creatures and dependents of government, can form no conception of the purity and dignity of their character under a different system. A case occurred with some foreign minister, we think it was probably General Turreau, that a vessel of his nation was the subject of a process in the national Court. He wished to arrest the progress of the affair, and applied to the administration to release the vessel and stop the proceedings; when told it was out of their power, he was overwhelmed with astonishment, and quite incredulous as to their assertion: his only consolation perhaps was, that if a nation existed, where the progress of justice could not be impeded by the government, that such a nation must speedily perish.

What danger can be apprehended from these judges? they have no army at their disposal; they have no patronage, they are not candidates for political promotion; they are liable to impeachment for misconduct; their proceedings are publick. They are necessarily elevated above the foul atmosphere of party; and their only ambition must be to receive the respect of the nation, from a performance of their high duties with stern integrity and impartiality. So long as the independence of the judges is maintained, so long our freedom will be secure. So long as the people are possessed of sufficient intelligence to protect these only disinterested, permanent guardians of their right, however they may be divided into parties or inflamed by the violence of factions, they may still be safe from oppression. Whenever any set of men shall entertain designs against the constitution, either to overwhelm it in the anarchy of simple democracy or to found on its ruins a usurpation of monarchical power, they will commence their operations, by open or insidious attacks to weaken and overthrow the judiciary.

We select another extract to give an additional specimen of the author's representation of our character.

“ In fact, it is as much by the manners of a people as by the wisdom of their legislators, that useful reforms may be made without a political convulsion. When the people only differ about the means of effecting the publick good; when the love of country is the source of that divergence and salutary inquietude that agitates the citizens; in a word, when the diversity of opinions does not alter their principles, and that they are blended with the interests of the state, it is possible, perhaps easy, to temper the pride of individual will, and to rally it to a common centre of wants and advantages. But there, where a divergence of opinion rises from an impure source; where avarice has insulated every individual, degraded every soul, depraved every heart; there, where a private and exclusive interest has transformed the citizens into brokers, lawyers, shopkeepers and journalists; there, where men are valued only in proportion to their monied weight; there, where traders may engross the publick functions as they do merchandize, where merit and talents dread the homage and choice of the peo-

ple;* there, where the parties known under the names of democratick and federalist, only struggle to usurp power or calumniate those who are clothed with it, and invoke the support of the constitution,^a but to violate it, and to degrade the authorities which are derived from it.

“There, where all the relations of language, of manners, of habits, of passions, and of prejudices, necessarily render the confederation submissive to the directions of a foreign power, of a power whose recollections, whose pride, perhaps legitimate, whose commercial system, and even the analogy of political system, render her essentially the enemy of the states of the Union; there in fine, where England still exercises in fact, all the rights of supremacy, where she has been able to exact and obtain with impunity the sacrifice of national honour as a tribute of expiation; there where, ———, but I stop: to wish to amend such a system by partial reforms, and prevent the subversion of the state by a change of manners or institutions, is to embrace the chimera of the Alchymists, or that of perpetual motion.” p. 135.

a“ This is a circumstance whimsical enough and peculiar to the United States. The *coryphées* of the two parties who sit in Congress, and whose discussions often degenerate into disputes and personal quarrels, attach themselves principally to revile the authority and cast a ridicule over the acts of government, which always emanate from the dominant party. They do not cease to invoke reciprocally in their political debates the observance of the constitution, and draw even from its text, consequences often very just and always contradictory. Meet the question then frankly; agree that your constitution is defective; and work in concert to correct your system if there be still time; for it must be agreed that all modification of the constitutional principle, (the sovereignty of the people) may give rise to seditious movements, occasion the affranchisement of particular states, and of course the rupture of the federal chain. It will be so much more difficult to avoid it, as all the measures of reform, to be salutary, must bear at once

* Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus;
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. *Hor. o. 2. b. 3.*

upon manners and institutions, and that the people are still more attached to their habits than to their laws. We will readily agree, that however vicious the constitution may be, it is not so in all its parts. It might suit with some slight changes an agricultural people, and who should be only agricultural. But how persuade the Americans to break the yoke of commerce? It is doubtful, even in the present state of their manners, if they could support a democratick regimen, unless they were constrained and prepared for it by a temporary and extremely strong government, and against which it would perhaps be necessary to have guarantees to prevent usurpation. In serious times, and where the safety of the state might be compromised, the authority of the executive is extended to give more action to the government, and an extra constitutional power is instituted, and always without a limit. The case in which we may have recourse to such extraordinary measures ought to be foreseen by the constitution. The dictatorship more than once saved the Roman republick. In England, they suspend the action of the law of *habeas corpus*," &c.

We took up this work with a resolution to make no allusion to the character of its author: but is it possible to find our country thus calumniated before the world, by a foreign minister who resided here eight years, without recalling to its recollection who this minister was, that it may be better able to appreciate his testimony? General Turreau was sent to the United States, in the early stages of the late memorable usurpation in France, when it was expedient to get rid of a few personages of his stamp. He was kept here when want of skill was of little importance to a government, whose whole diplomatick intercourse with other nations, was carried on in the style of a coarse and insolent dictating. A Colonel of gens d'armes was as good as any other agent. The grotesque appearance of this ambassador would have been ludicrous, if the associations he excited had not have inspired horror. Combining all that was ferocious and vulgar in the guard-house and the Jacobin Club, the first impression was laughter, the second disgust. With whiskers more formidable than any sapper of the Imperial guard, this most sanguinary partizan in the Vendean war was decorated with rouge, and this trifling circumstance connected with the part he had played in that war, pro-

duces a shuddering sensation almost indescribable. The scandalous domestick scenes that occurred soon after his arrival, while they reflected disgrace on a government which could employ such agents, shewed how reckless it was of all the feelings of decorum and morality. The exile of an obnoxious individual, was the purpose answered; and if he was only arrogant and violent, all his duties were fulfilled. There are many passages in this work which prove how deficient he was in skill, of which one may be cited as an example. He talks loudly of English injustice and violations of the laws of nations, and the atrocious outrages they committed in the cases of the Chesapeak frigate and Copenhagen. These are bad enough, we all know; yet, were not the last things that a skilful agent of Napoleon would have mentioned, the laws of nations, or the faith of treaties? if these things should have been mentioned to him, would he not have coughed, talked about the weather, or any other subject that could have diverted the conversation? General Turreau uses the most opprobrious terms in speaking of the administration, he talks of their imbecility, their perfidy, &c. and from the manner in which he speaks of the trade of St. Domingo and the expedition of Miranda, it is obvious what kind of style he must have used in his communications. Indeed, there is nothing that has raised a deeper blush of national feeling, than the endurance of this Ambassador by our government; and this too, when the unskilful insolence of a contemporary foreign Envoy was promptly resented. We trust that the time has passed when any considerations of policy, which must be erroneous ones, will ever tolerate any want of respect in the conduct of diplomatick agents at Washington.

We shall take one more extract which forms the conclusion of the book.

“Americans, nature has been so liberal towards you, that you may renounce advantages which can only be precarious, since they do not enter into her views, and that they lead you from your real destination. Be agriculturists. If you become manufacturers let it be only for your wants: stop there. Above all no foreign commerce, except in your ports. Open them to all trading people; and never leave them. Employ neither ambassadors nor resident ministers in the courts of Europe; and do not suffer any among your

selves. Receive only consular agents, and accord them the jurisdiction and privileges that they possess elsewhere.

“ Amend your constitution ; do not grant naturalization so easily ; your population will grow less rapidly, but it will be more healthy : reform and simplify your jurisprudence.

“ Renounce conquests even in opinion ; you are already too extensive. Prepare yourselves for an inevitable separation, that it may take place without commotion. Be in fine, what you ought to be, an insulated people, enjoying the benefits of nature under a liberal constitution, you will be happy and history will not speak of you.”

If it had not have been for the pretty pastoral termination of this passage, the whole of it might have been comprised in one sentence ; be Chinese. To attain this blessing of pure democracy, we are to wave all the advantages of our situation ; we are to abandon all the resources which are derived from the accumulation of wealth, for the diffusion of learning, of civilization and refinement ; we are to renounce the ocean, all communication with the rest of the world, and all desire of fame, “ that history may not speak of us ;” we are to eat black broth, pass our time in naked gymnastick exercises, in oppressing, and from time, murdering Helots ; in one word, we are to give up all the benefits which in the progress of the last three centuries, have accrued to the world, and to move in a retrograde step as fast as possible, to a state of society such as it was, when it first emerged from barbarism—Enough of this ; the destiny of the United States is and must be different ; our motto is, *Forward*.

A narrative of the events which have taken place in France from the landing of Napoleon Buonaparte, on the first of March, 1815, till the restoration of Louis XVIII. with an account of the present state of Society and publick opinion. By Helen Maria Williams, 12mo. p. p. 247. Philadelphia. M. Thomas.

The world is almost as much tired of hearing of Buonaparte, as that Athenian was of Aristides, who wanted to vote for his ostracism, though not precisely for the same